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AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION MEETING POSTPONED.

In the issue of Public Health Reports for September 22 the announcement was made that the Surgeon General would present a war program of the Public Health Service at the meetings of the American Public Health Association at Chicago October 14-17. At the request of the Surgeon General this meeting was postponed and will be held instead December 9-12. Headquarters will be, as previously announced, at Hotel Morrison, Chicago.

Further announcements will be issued by the American Public Health Association, 126 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, Mass., and will be published in the American Journal of Public Health.

HOME NURSING SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

In an effort to reduce unnecessary calls on the overworked physicians because of the present epidemic of influenza, the Public Health Service has issued a bulletin calling upon the people of the country to learn something about the home care of patients ill with influenza. Physicians everywhere have complained of the large number of unnecessary calls they have been compelled to make because of the inability of many people to distinguish between the cases requiring expert medical care and those which could readily be cared for without a physician. With influenza continuing to spread in many parts of the country, and with an acute shortage of doctors and nurses in most communities, every unnecessary call on physicians or nurses makes it so much harder to meet the urgent needs of patients who are seriously ill.

Following is the text of the bulletin issued to the public:

"Every person who feels sick and appears to be developing an attack of influenza should at once be put to bed in a well-ventilated room. If his bowels have moved regularly, it is not necessary to give a physic; where a physic is needed, a dose of castor oil or Rochelle salts should be given.

"The room should be cleared of all unnecessary furniture, bric-a-brac, and rugs. A wash basin, pitcher and slop bowl, soap and towels should be at hand, preferably in the room or just outside the door.

"If the patient is feverish, a doctor should be called, and this should be done in any case if the patient appears very sick, or coughs up pinkish (blood stained) sputum, or breathes rapidly and painfully.

"Most of the patients cough up considerable mucus; in some there is much mucus discharged from the nose and throat. This material should not be collected in handkerchiefs, but rather on bits of old rags, or toilet paper, or on paper napkins. As soon as used, these rags or papers should be placed in a paper bag kept beside the bed.

Pocket handkerchiefs are out of place in the sick room and should not be used by patients. The rags or papers in the paper bag should be burned.

"The patients will not be hungry, and the diet should therefore be light. Milk, a soft-boiled egg, some toast or crackers, a bit of jelly or jam, stewed fruit, some cooked cereal like oatmeal, hominy, or rice; these will suffice in most cases.

"The comfort of the patient depends on a number of little things, and these should not be overlooked. Among these may be mentioned a well ventilated room; a thoroughly clean bed with fresh, smooth sheets and pillow cases; quiet, so that refreshing sleep may be had; cool drinking water conveniently placed; a cool compress to the forehead if there is headache; keeping the patient's hands and face clean, and the hair combed; keeping his mouth clean, preferably with some pleasant mouth wash; letting the patient know that some one is within call, but not annoying him with too much fussing; giving the patient plenty of opportunity to rest and sleep.

"It is advisable to give the sick room a good airing several times a day. The patient should be well protected against cold and draughts and then the windows should be opened widely to let in the fresh air.

"So much for the patient. It is equally important to consider the person who is caring for him. It is important to remember that the disease is spread by breathing germ-laden matter sprayed into the air by the patient in coughing or even in ordinary breathing. The attendant should therefore wear a gauze mask over her mouth and nose while she is in the sick room. Such a mask is easily made by folding a piece of gauze fourfold, sewing a piece of tape at the four corners, and tying the upper set of tapes over the ears, the lower set around the neck. If the folded piece of gauze is about 6 inches square, it will nicely cover both mouth and nose. Such a mask can be worn without discomfort for several hours, after which it can be boiled in water, dried, and be used over.

"The attendant should always wash her hands with soap and water immediately after waiting on or touching the patient. This is important, for carelessness in this direction may easily cause the attendant to become infected with the disease germs.

"Attendants should, if possible, wear a washable gown or an apron which covers the dress. This will make it much simpler to avoid infection.

"It is desirable that all attendants learn how to use a fever thermometer. This is not at all a difficult matter, and the use of such a thermometer is a great help in caring for the patients. The druggist who sells these thermometers will be glad to show how they are used.

"In closing, one word of caution: If in doubt, call the doctor."